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GOP holding off Dems' push to gain Senate control.
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TOO CLOSE TO CALL

PENNSYLVANIA VOTE COULD DECIDE OUTCOME OF PRESIDENCY

Angela Weiss/AFP via Getty Images

Joe Biden said in the wee hours he is still optimistic about the outcome as counting continued into Wednesday morning in key swing states.

Evan Vucci/Associated Press

President Donald Trump is pushing for a repeat of 2016, piling up some key early victories. Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania were still in play Wednesday.

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump and Democratic challenger Joe Biden were locked in tight races in battleground states across the country Tuesday night as they concluded an epic campaign that will shape America's response to the surging pandemic and foundational questions of economic fairness and racial justice.

Mr. Biden picked up the first battleground state of the night, New Hampshire, a small prize that Mr. Trump tried to steal from Democrats. But races were too early to call in the most fiercely contested and critical states on the map, including Florida, North Carolina, Georgia and Pennsylvania.

Mr. Biden won California, the nation's biggest electoral haul, and other predictable victories including Colorado and Virginia, two former battlegrounds that have become Democratic strongholds. Mr. Trump's wins included Kansas, North Dakota and other conservative bastions.

Americans made their choices as the nation faced a confluence of historic crises with each candidate declaring the other fundamentally unfit to navigate the challenges. Daily life has been upended by the coronavirus, which has killed more than 232,000 Americans and cost millions of jobs.

Millions of voters braved their worries about the virus — and some long lines — to turn out in person, joining 102 million fellow Americans who voted days or weeks earlier, a record number that represented 73% of the total vote in the 2016 presidential election.

Early results in several key battleground states were in flux as election officials processed a

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ELECTION 2020

MORE COVERAGE

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Republican Guy Reschenthaler appears to hold lead, though many ballots uncounted.
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ON THE WEB
Up-to-the-minute national and state election results at **post-gazette.com**

State: No results anytime soon

By Julian Routh
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As counties in the battleground state continued to work through the 2.5 million mail-in ballots that inundated their warehouses, the voters in Pennsylvania who cast them — and the millions who voted in-person Tuesday — waited for results in the race for the White House between President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden.

Those results, state officials have cautioned, aren't going to be finished any time soon, and even though Mr. Trump has insisted he is winning and that his lead in Pennsylvania is "almost impossible to catch," the data shows that it isn't.

As of 2:40 a.m. Wednesday, Mr. Trump held a 652,000-vote lead in Pennsylvania, a state that could play a key role in determining if he's re-elected, but Mr. Biden was expected to gain ground overnight as more of the Democrat-heavy mail-in ballots were tallied.

Mr. Trump's lead was bolstered by the counting of nearly 3.7 million in-person votes, which were expected to stray Republican and give him an early lead. About 1.32 million mail-in ballots were counted as of 2:40 a.m. — out of the more than 2.5 million that were successfully cast in the election. Of those 2.5 million, more than 1.64 million were cast by Democrats and 580,000 by Republicans.

With so many ballots still pending, the worry that had circulated among Democratic politics for weeks — that Mr. Trump would declare himself the winner in Pennsylvania based on results that relied heavily on Republican-friendly in-person votes — started to materialize in the early morning hours of Wednesday, when he spoke after 2:30 a.m. and said he won the election.

Mr. Trump didn't explicitly say he won Pennsylvania, but said he is winning "by a tremendous amount of votes" at a margin that is "almost impossible to catch" — even though the count is still ongoing and so many ballots remain to be counted.

At 12:45 a.m., Mr. Biden, speaking in Wilmington, Del., said it's "gonna take time to count the voters, but we're gonna win Pennsylvania."

"[I've] been talking to folks in Philly, Allegheny County and

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Lamb locked in tight race with Parnell

By Daniel Moore
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

In the early morning hours Wednesday, Rep. Conor Lamb, D-Mt. Lebanon, was trailing Republican challenger Sean Parnell by a 56% to 44% margin in Pennsylvania's 17th Congressional District race.

With roughly 61% of precincts tallied and with mail-in ballots permitted to arrive until Friday, the nationally watched U.S. House race remained far from certain — a scenario that kept both candidates quiet on Election Night.

As of 1:27 a.m. Wednesday, Mr. Parnell garnered 127,136 votes compared with Mr. Lamb's 101,176 votes. A greater portion of Butler and Beaver County precincts were tallied as of that time than in Allegheny County, which tends to be more liberal.

Mr. Lamb, who set up his Election Night headquarters at the Steamfitters Local 449 union hall in Beechview, watched the results inside and set up a stage to address members of the media. (His campaign prohibited members of the public from attending due to COVID-19 restrictions on social gatherings.)

Mr. Parnell, a 39-year-old Afghanistan combat veteran with a Purple Heart, did not hold an event for the public or members of the media Tuesday. His campaign did not return requests for comment.

Around midnight, a campaign spokesman notified members of the media the congressman would be holding off on any speech.

The 17th District contest generated national attention over the last year, becoming in some ways a proxy battle of the polarizing presidential contest between President

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COVID-19 COVERAGE: To view our continuing coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic, go to **https://newsinteractive.post-gazette.com/coronavirus**

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